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INTERROGATION OF SS OBERSTURMBÄHNFÜHRER
URBAN, LIAISON OFFICER OF RSHA/VI WITH THE
CRYPTO. BUREAU OF HUNGARIAN GENERAL STAFF.

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UNITED STATES FORCES
EUROPEAN THEATRE
HEADQUARTERS, ARMY SECURITY AGENCY
EUROPE.

8th February, 1946.

INTERROGATION OF SS OBERSTURMBÄHNFÜHRER URBAN

Place: CIE 6, Morsburg

Interrogator: 1st Lt. Alfred P. Fehl.

1. Civil and Military Career:

Josef Adolf Urban was born 8th January, 1897 in Saaz, Bohemia. He was an Austrian soldier in the first World War. Most of his life between wars was spent in various business enterprises -- from life insurance to the managing of a professional football club. From 1939 to 1941 he was affiliated with the Donaudampfschiffahrt in Vienna, and at the same time became active in Amt VI of the RSHA (Auslandsnachrichtendienst) for which he was commissioned as Sturmbahnführer in the SS. In 1941 he became Beauftragter of Amt VI in Budapest, Hungary, where he was detailed to receive intelligence from as many sources as possible, and send it by radio or courier to the RSHA offices in Vienna and Berlin. He continued in this activity until the end of the war and was arrested in Austria where he had fled from the Russians.

2. Connection between RSHA/VI and Abteilung X of the Hungarian

General Staff:

According to Urban RSHA/VI had offices in or dealing with every major country and intelligence was obtained through agents, military attache reports, and cryptanalysis. The most important information from cryptanalytic sources was obtained from the Hungarians and the Poles with whom the Germans had close liaison. Abteilung X of the second division of the Hungarian General Staff supplied Urban with this kind of intelligence. This section consisted of about 50 persons and worked on the diplomatic traffic of every country in the world. Urban's office in Budapest received the Hungarian translations of the broken traffic from Abteilung X, re-translated it into German and had it sent by radio or courier to Vienna and Berlin, depending upon its urgency and interest (see note 1). He thinks that many times the traffic was broken, translated, re-translated and sent out over the air on the same day. Urban remarked that both he and the others in his own office were very busy, since they received from 40 to 100 messages from Abteilung X daily, and there were only 4 persons to cope with them (see note 2).

3. Organization and Activities of Abteilung X:

As far as Urban could remember the chief personalities and division of labour of this section were as follows:

- a. Chief: General Major Petrikovits
- b. Stellvertreter: Oberst Szabo
- c. Departments:
 1. Turkish Abteilung
Chef: Oberstlttn. Klaar
Dechiffreur: Lttn. Titus Vass
Translator: Lttn. Sesevits
 2. Englische u. Americanische Abteilung
(England, Nord u. Sud Amerika, Aegyptian)
Oberstlttn. Andreansky
Oberst Szabo
 3. Französische Abteilung
(Frankreich u. Kolloni, Schweiz, Griechenland,
Belgien, Holland)
Obltn. Bonami
Rittmeister Daron Zech
 4. Russische Abteilung
(Bulgarien, Yougoslavia, Slowakei, Russland)
 5. Rumänische Abteilung
(Rumanien)
 6. Swedische Abteilung
(Schweden, Norwegen)
 7. Italienische Abteilung
(Mussolini, Königlich, Vatikan)
 8. Spanische Abteilung
(Spanien, Portugal)
 9. (?)
 10. Japanische Abteilung
(Japan u. China)

None of these ten sections had more than 4 or 5 people working in it, according to Urban. The most important section was the Turkish since the best and most information was obtained from breaking the diplomatic code of the Turkish Ministries in Moscow, London, Washington, and Paris. Much information was gained from the above source concerning the Yalta, Teheran, Cairo, and Casablanca conferences. A fair amount was obtained from the Russian and French ministries, but in the last stages of the war the Russians changed their code to one which was almost impossible to compromise. Some information was obtained from other countries, but it was the Turkish source that Urban constantly emphasized. According to him, the best men were employed in the Turkish section, including Titus Vass, their ace cryptanalyst.

All messages intercepted and broken by Abteilung X were, in addition to Urban's copy, given the following disposition:

- 1 copy--die Kanzlei des Reichsverwesers Horthy
- 1 copy--der Generalstabs-Chef.
- 1 copy--der Außenminister
- 1 copy--der Ungarische Ministerpräsident
- 1 copy--Archiven

It seems that one who re-translated the Hungarian versions into German as Urban did should be able to remember the contents of specific messages, but he could give only general subjects with which they dealt such as: Russian pressure for a second front, Allied demands for observers on the Russian front, Allied occupational areas in Germany, partitioning of German industry, Balkan boundary questions, etc. He said that in order to recall specific messages he would have to get together with the others in his office and talk them over. Better than that, however, would be to find the archives.

4. Location of the Archives:

In November, 1944 when the Russians were beginning to threaten Budapest the whole Hungarian General Staff moved westward. Urban helped to move Petrikovits' Abteilung X to Und bei Oedenburg while the closely affiliated Intercept Group under Major Bibo moved to a small village 40 km. from there. In March, 1945 another move was necessary, so Major General Petrikovits with all the personnel of Abteilung X came by horse and wagon to Austria via Aspang and stayed in Bad Hall by Kremsmünster. Later they went to a small village in the neighbourhood of Passau. Major Bibo took his group to Steierling bei Steyer, Austria, where Urban had also gone. Part of the equipment and personnel went to a mill in a nearby woods and part to Jagdschloss Schaumburg Lippe in the same neighbourhood. Much of the intercept equipment was turned over to the American authorities there near the end of the war. Exactly where the archives are, Urban does not know, but it must be somewhere in eastern Bavaria where the entire Hungarian General Staff fled. All the personnel must be somewhere in Bavaria, he thinks. Most important people in giving the location of this material are, according to Urban: General Major Petrikovits, Oberstlttn. Klar, Lttn. Sesevits, Lttn. Titus Vass. Obltn. Donam, Oberstlttn. Andreensky, and Major Bilbo.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

1. All urgent messages were sent to RSHA/VI in Berlin by radio except those dealing with the Balkans--they were radioed to Vienna, RSHA/VI E. Less urgent messages were sent by courier to Vienna and from there to Berlin.
2. Urban's office in Budapest, RSHA/VI E2, consisted of the following:
 - a. Obersturmbahnführer Urban--Chef and Translator.
 - b. Obersturmführer Dienst--Adjutant, Encypherer, and Decypherer of the office's outgoing messages.
 - c. Oberscharf Hans Müller--Radio operator, Encypherer and Decypherer of incoming and outgoing messages.
 - d. Herr Thomas--Typist and Translator.